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Letter dated 26 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Further to my letter dated 14 November 2008 (A/63/554-S/2008/719), I have the honour to transmit a second letter addressed to you by the President of the Republic of Cyprus, Demetris Christofias, dated 25 November 2008 (see annex).

Following the serious incident against which President Christofias protested, through his letter of 14 November 2008, and despite bringing this incident to your attention and that of the Security Council, as well as of the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, the harassment of vessels by Turkish warships within the exclusive economic zone of the Republic of Cyprus has continued unabated, in a systematic and persistent manner, in complete disregard of Cyprus' sovereign rights.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 21, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Minas **Hadjimichael**

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Annex to the letter dated 26 November 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Subsequent to my letter of 14 November 2008, at least three serious incidents took place involving the harassment of research vessels by Turkish warships in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Republic of Cyprus. I find myself in the unpleasant position of expressing my dismay over the continuation of such aggressive actions.

On 19 November, two vessels, *Harrier Explorer* and *Marja*, were performing oceanographic work within the EEZ south of the coast of Cyprus. After being harassed by the Turkish corvette *Bandirma* they were obliged to change location. On 21 November, two Turkish warships harassed the cargo ship *Aquarius G*, which is involved in the research, by repeatedly blocking its course until it was forced to return to Cypriot territorial waters. Again, on 24 November, the Turkish frigate *Gemlik* approached *Harrier Explorer* and *Aquarius G* and repeated the harassment by blocking the exploratory vessels' route, forcing them into dangerous manoeuvres. Despite several attempts by the captain of *Harrier Explorer* to contact the Turkish captain over the radio, there was no response. Furthermore, the Turkish naval force is constantly stationed within a short distance from the research vessels observing their actions and movements.

The continuation of these incidents, I am sad to observe, unavoidably impacts negatively on our efforts to reach a negotiated solution to the Cyprus problem. On my part, I am doing everything in my power to protect the process of negotiations and to bring it to a positive conclusion. It is important, at the same time, that the United Nations and the international community support these efforts through effective solidarity.

(*Signed*) Demetris **Christofias**
President of the Republic of Cyprus